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What is claimed:

1. A method for reducing β -cell dysfunction in an individual with a pancreatic disorder, comprising:
 - (a) introducing a nucleic acid molecule encoding an inhibitor of IL-1 β into a β cell; and
 - (b) transplanting the β cell of step (a) into the individual so as to reduce β cell dysfunction.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the inhibitor of IL-1 β activity is an interleukin-1 receptor antagonist protein.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein the inhibitor of IL-1 β activity is an NF- κ B inhibitor.
4. The method of claim 1 wherein the inhibitor of IL-1 β is an insulin like growth factor-1.
5. A method for reducing Fas mediated β -cell apoptosis in an individual with a pancreatic disorder, comprising:

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cont.
- (a) introducing a nucleic acid molecule encoding an inhibitor of Fas mediated apoptosis into a β cell; and
 - (b) transplanting the β cell of step (a) into the individual so as to reduce β cell apoptosis.

6. The method of claim 5 wherein the inhibitor of Fas mediated apoptosis is an dominant negative mutant of the Fas protein.

7. The method of claim 5 wherein the inhibitor of Fas mediated apoptosis is a dominant negative mutant of the FADD protein.

8. The method of claim 5 wherein the inhibitor of Fas mediated apoptosis is a member of the bcl-2 protein family.

9. A mammalian β -cell comprising a recombinant nucleic acid molecule, said nucleic acid molecule comprising and expressing an inhibitor of IL-1 β activity, wherein the expression of the inhibitor of IL-1 β activity reduces β cell dysfunction.

10. The β -cell of claim 9 wherein the inhibitor of IL-1 β activity is an interleukin-1 receptor antagonist protein.

11. The β -cell of claim 9 wherein the inhibitor of IL-1 β is an NF- κ B inhibitor protein.
12. The β -cell of claim 9 wherein the inhibitor of IL-1 β is an insulin like growth factor-1 protein.
13. A recombinant viral vector comprising a nucleic acid molecule encoding an inhibitor of IL-1 β activity.
14. The recombinant viral vector of claim 13 wherein the inhibitor of IL-1 β is an interleukin-1 receptor antagonist protein.
15. The recombinant viral vector of claim 14 wherein the inhibitor of IL-1 β is a NF- κ B inhibitor.
16. The recombinant viral vector of claim 14 wherein the inhibitor of IL-1 β is an insulin like growth factor-1 protein.
17. The recombinant viral vector of claim 14 wherein the recombinant viral vector is

an adenovirus vector.

18. The recombinant viral vector of claim 14 wherein the recombinant viral vector is a lentivirus vector.

19. The recombinant viral vector of claim 14 wherein the recombinant viral vector is a herpes simplex viral vector.

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